

Appl. No. : 10/017,750
Filed : December 7, 2001

REMARKS

Claims 1-103 stand rejected. Applicants have amended Claims 55, 76, and 97. Thus, Claims 1-103 are pending in the application and are presented for reconsideration and further examination in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Interview Summary

Applicant would like to thank the Examiners for taking the time to meet and discuss the outstanding Office Action in a personal interview with counsel for Applicant on March 8, 2005. During the interview, proposed amendments to Claims 55, 76, and 97 were discussed in view of the art of record. The Examiners and counsel for Applicant crafted a claim amendment directed to updating a filtering system that controls access to Internet sites. More particularly, the proposed amendment was directed to further defining the identifiers uploaded to the database factory in Claim 97 and comprises the following language: "a master database including one or more identifiers received from a user to request access to an Internet website/page." The Examiners suggested adding similar language to Claim 76.

The Examiners and counsel for Applicant further discussed the aspects of an uncategorized request frequency found in Claim 24 and the use of rules or flexible filters which are disclosed in Applicant's specification in view of the art of record.

Based on the initial examination and review by the Examiners of U.S. Patent No. 6,233,618 to Shannon during the interview, it was agreed that Claims 1, 24, and 41 are patentable. It was further agreed that the proposed amendment to add the aspect of identifiers being received from the user to Claims 76 and 97 would overcome the applied prior art. Counsel for Applicant and the Examiners further agreed to add this concept to Claim 55. Thus, counsel for Applicant has presented amended Claim 55 herein, which now includes the feature "wherein the database of identifiers includes at least one uncategorized identifier corresponding to a website/page requested to be accessed by a user" to overcome the applied prior art.

Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1, 24, and 41 and amended Claims 55, 76, and 97 define subject matter that is patentable over the art of record. Furthermore, since dependent Claims 2-23, 25-54, 56-75, 77-96, and 98-103 each depend from one of independent Claims 1, 24, 55, 76, and 97; applicant respectfully submits that these claims also define patentable subject

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matter for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend. A more detailed discussion of the patentability of these claims over the cited prior art is presented below.

Arrangement of the Specification Headings

The Examiner identified the headings in the specification as not conforming with 37 C.F.R. § 1.77(b). The Examiner specifically noted that the headings have sentence capitalization with underlining.

The text of 37 C.F.R. § 1.77(b) provides a recommended framework for patent applications. While not required, Applicant has substantially complied with those recommendations and respectfully submits that revisions to the titles at this time are not required. Applicant will more closely follow the recommended framework for the continuation filings to the pending application and include the recommended font for the headings.

Rejection under §35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Shannon (U.S. Patent No. 6,233,618)

The Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 24, 41, 55, 76, and 97 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,233,618 to Shannon. Applicant's Claim 1 is directed to a system for collecting identifiers for updating a filtering system that includes, among other elements, a filter system configured to "send the identifier to a database factory if the identifier is not in the master database" and a database factory configured to "receive the identifier from the filter system if the identifier was not in the master database." Claims 24 and 41 include similar features. As discussed during the interview, Shannon does not disclose or teach a filter system as claimed in Claims 1, 24, and 41.

Shannon discloses a network device (see Figure 4) and a category database utilized by the network device to limit access to the Internet. Unlike Applicant's Claim 1 where identifiers are provided to the filter system and master database in response to a user's request for a website, the category database in Shannon is updated by a network-walker (see Figure 2) that is separate from the network device. The automated network-walker "continually examine[s] the world wide web, and any other accessible networked data servers for new addresses, files, web sites, home pages" and "gather[s] newly found URL's and IP addresses of web servers or other content providing computers." (see col. 10, lines 1-6). Thus, the network-walker operates separately

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from and is independent of the network device. ("In this invention, the category database 208 is created separately for the operation of the network device 100.") (col. 9, lines 15-16).

An update process utilizing a network-walker operates differently and is inherently inefficient when compared to Applicant's Claim 1. Shannon's network-walker "surfs the web" (col. 10, line 3) to gather "newly found URL's and IP addresses." (col. 10, lines 4-5) Industry estimates the number of currently existing websites at tens of millions, each potentially needing to be accessed by the network-walker in Shannon. Of course many of these websites may never be visited by the user of the Shannon system even though the website has been identified by the network-walker. The inefficiency of the Shannon system is compounded by requiring this unwieldy number of identified websites to each be reviewed by a human (see Figure 2, box 156).

In view of the Shannon reference, Claims 97 has been amended to include "a master database including one or more identifiers received from a user to request access to an Internet website/page, and one or more categories associated with each of the one or more identifiers;" and "an access system coupled to the WAN and configured to send an identifier request if the identifier request is not in the master database." (emphasis added). Similar language has been included in independent Claim 76. As was discussed above, the Examiners have agreed that these limitations are neither taught nor suggested by the art of record, and that they are, therefore, distinguished over the art of record based on the Examiners initial examination and their review of the Shannon reference during the interview.

Continuing with this same distinguishing concept, counsel for Applicant has submitted herewith amended Claim 55 which includes the feature "wherein the database of identifiers includes at least one uncategorized identifier corresponding to a website/page requested to be accessed by a user." Applicant submits that this limitation, in combination with the other elements of Claim 55, overcomes the applied prior art.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of Claims 1, 24, 41, 55, 76, and 97 be withdrawn. Dependent Claims 2-23, 25-54, 56-75, 77-96, and 98-103 each depend from one of independent Claims 1, 24, 55, 76, and 97 and thus are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend.

In view of the comments made above, no additional discussion of the rejections of several of the dependent claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is warranted at this time.

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CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims, and that those claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is most earnestly solicited.

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the noted rejections and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if an issue requires clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve any such issue promptly.


Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 3/11/05

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